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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000163

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/01/2020

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [TU](#) [IS](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH MFA: "WE'LL KEEP UP OUR PRESSURE" ON IRAN

REF: A. STATE 9124

[1](#)B. ANKARA 108

[1](#)C. SECDEF 292154Z JAN 10

Classified By: Ambassador James Jeffrey, for reasons 1.4(b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. In a February 1 meeting with MFA U/S Sinirlioglu, the Ambassador conveyed REF A points on increasing pressure on Iran to curb its nuclear ambitions. Sinirlioglu noted that the Turkish Government is skeptical about the usefulness of new sanctions, but considers unity of the international community to be "essential." He said Ankara will keep up its pressure on Tehran when it hosts the Turkey-Iran Joint Economic Commission this week, and that he would speak with Iranian FM Mottaki on the margins of that meeting. On relations with Israel, Sinirlioglu contended that "everyone" has problems with the current Israeli government. Ankara values its relations with Israel, he said. "But not saying to Israel what should be said is not helpful." END SUMMARY.

Iran

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[1](#)2. (C) The Ambassador conveyed REF A points to Undersecretary Sinirlioglu, emphasizing that while the US stands by its offer to engage with Iran, the time has come to increase pressure on Tehran and therefore to consider appropriate measures. Sinirlioglu listened carefully as the Ambassador went through the main points. He noted that he had discussed this issue last week with the Chinese Foreign Minister, who had been visiting Turkey. The Chinese were also skeptical about the usefulness of new sanctions, Sinirlioglu said. Still, unity is important, indeed "absolutely essential."

[1](#)3. (C) Sinirlioglu commented that: "If we say something and cannot follow up it will be perceived as weakness." He added that it would also weaken the position of the opposition inside Iran. The opposition has indicated to the GOT that a strong international response is the only way to show Iran that the international community is serious.

[1](#)4. (C) He said he knows that the 5-plus-1 offer is still on the table, and that he would talk to Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki when he visits Ankara this week for the Turkey-Iran Joint Economic Commission meeting. "We'll keep up our

pressure."

¶5. (C) The Ambassador underscored that what we're doing is not working, and therefore we are at the point of looking for alternatives. (Note: Pol/Mil Counselor reviewed the same REF A points in greater detail with MFA Nonproliferation and Disarmament Deputy Director General Omer Tuzel on the same day. End Note)

QDR

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¶6. (C) The Ambassador informed Sinirlioglu that the results of the Quadrennial Defense Review (REF C) would be released in Washington later that day, and noted that it reiterates that missile defensive measures are aimed at Iran and Korea, and not Russia or China. It also indicates US plans to maintain a significant level of deployed forces in Europe.

MD

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¶7. (C) The Ambassador said he understood the visit of U/S for Arms Control and International Security Affairs Tauscher had been pushed back, but warned that if Ankara is not prepared to provide substantive responses on Missile Defense, Tauscher might have to reconsider her timing. This is a major issue for Washington, he noted, and if Ankara is not prepared to participate, the US will accept that but be forced to look at other options. Sinirlioglu said he understood, and would try to get back to the Embassy "before we fix a date."

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Israel

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¶8. (C) The Ambassador urged that Ankara continue to mend the Turkey-Israel relationship, and questioned PM Erdogan's latest comments on the issue. Sinirlioglu replied that the PM had actually spoken more carefully than he has in the past, but had been greatly "annoyed" when Israeli PM Netanyahu had said he does not trust Erdogan but does trust French President Sarkozy. "That's a contradiction."

¶9. (C) Sinirlioglu contended that the Israeli issue should not be viewed as a Turkish problem. The problem with the current Israeli government is a problem for everyone, he said. He noted that Tel Aviv is "not moving one inch" in its discussions with former Senator Mitchell. Ankara values its relations with Israel, he said. "But not saying to Israel what should be said is not helpful." He added that within Israel, Turkey's views are considered important. The peace movement within Israel has asked Turkey to speak even louder.

Visits

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¶10. (C) The Ambassador and Sinirlioglu reviewed upcoming visits and meetings:

- USF-I Commander General Odierno to Ankara, February 2-4;
- U/S Burns to Ankara on February 18 (Sinirlioglu pointed out that an National Security Council meeting February 19 would preclude meetings that day with GOT officials; therefore February 18 is preferred);
- U/S Sinirlioglu to Washington February 15-16 (we pointed out that February 15 is a holiday but promised to try to secure meetings that day to allow Sinirlioglu to depart Washington on February 16;
- Energy Working Group in Washington February 19;
- Economic Partnership Commission on March 22, at the level of A/S Fernandez and Deputy U/S Akil (Sinirlioglu agreed with this format);
- Foreign Minister Davutoglu will indeed attend the Munich Security Conference, according to Sinirlioglu. He promised to check on potential side meetings with NSA General Jones,

Deputy Secretary Steinberg and U.S. Senator Kerry.  
Jeffrey

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